

EXPECTATIONS OF COMBAT LEADERS

Leadership: As Leaders you are the standard-bearers of our Corps' history, reputation and values. Marines and Sailors will look to you for their cues, every thing you do or say or fail to do or say will set the tone for your unit. You are ALWAYS in charge.

Time off, better chow, more creature comforts are secondary elements of troop welfare. First-rate training, dedicated leadership and a sense of belonging to tight unit is true troop welfare. Only when the latter is missing does the former take on importance.

Sometimes leadership means making people do what deep down they know they should be doing anyway, it means being unpopular, your Marines need a leader not a buddy. Making the "easy" or popular decision instead of making the difficult and unpopular but correct decision, will reward you with mission failure and make casualties of your Marines. *"Leaders must have a strong sense of the great responsibility of their office; the resources they expend in war are human lives."*—War will be "come as you are." Remember, the **enemy**, not an inspection team will grade us on our capabilities.

Treat our Marines in Sailors with respect. They are willing to execute your orders and die doing so. Lead them up that hill, don't push them. Get negative with a Marine as a **last resort**.

Stop rumors immediately. Do not allow the morale of your unit to rise and fall on the basis of the latest rumor

As a unit we must be in harmony. Trust your chain of command. Once a decision is made support it 100 %. Stop rumors and grumbling immediately. Never do anything that fosters the notion that "higher is screwed up". Remember, you are somebody's "higher" too.

Training. Everything is Training and Never miss an opportunity to train. Training does NOT stop in theater. Make a list of your unit tasks /battle drills that you are most dissatisfied with and use that as your start point for "opportunity training". This type of training usually comprises most of your small unit training time. Accept the fact that you will NOT be popular when you force your unit to drill the basics, but you will keep them alive. Focus on the basics and become brilliant at them.

Be Brilliant at the Basics, The Basics will be Habit .

*"Habit hardens the body for great exertions, strengthens the heart in great peril. Habit breeds that priceless quality, **calm**, which, passing from rifleman to commander will lighten the task."*

Great units do the basics well and with a high degree of proficiency and as habit. Good habits breed smart, tough, aggressive, Marines and Sailors that will win in combat. Bad habits breed timidity, and timidity breeds casualties and mission failure.

Weapons: Ensure weapons and ammo are cleaned and inspected at every opportunity. Do not allow slings to be removed from weapons or employed other than loop to swivel.

Combat Marksmanship: This is our reason for being. Nothing will give a Marine more confidence to close with the enemy than the knowledge that he and his buddies will hit what they shoot at. You must enforce great BZO data that is verified periodically to include PEQ-2s. You must ensure you are getting target feedback and applying it to a **standard**. Drill Condition 1 reloads / reload drills. This must be routine and accomplished blind folded, on the run etc. This will save lives one day. Immediate and remedial actions are key and must be performed blindfolded as well.

Weapons Maintenance: Most malfunctions and stoppages are self induced by the shooter. Poor reloading and dirty weapons are usually the reason, and this overcome by NCOs doing their jobs. Before and after every action NCOs will ensure weapons are in the proper condition code, cleaned and lubricated and Battle Site Zero is set on the rear sight. Ammo is checked and grenades are inspected. Broken and malfunctioning weapons will be reported immediately.

Before doing anything else (eating, sleeping, etc) weapons will be cleaned and ready.

Pre-Combat Checks and Inspections and Post-Combat Checks and Inspections are SOP and are at the VERY HEART of Leadership. This is a BASIC HABIT. They are called Pre-Combat Checks and inspections for a reason, they are NOT Pre-Combat Questions and Assumptions. This is not delegated below the Sqd Leader Level, Plt Cmdrs and Plt Sgts verify... NO EXCEPTIONS

Prescribed Load: Allow no deviations from the prescribed load and basic uniform...EVER. Deviations are conscious decisions by a commanding officer based on analysis of METT-T, NOT Personal Whims. At a minimum Marines and Sailors will have their gasmask and weapon on the body... at all times.

Discipline: Do not allow graffiti on uniforms, doo-rags, wristbands or other forms of jackassery, period.

Comm discipline: Enforce proper reporting and comm procedures. Use of pro words, reporting formats and proper radio checks cut down on traffic and confusion.

Light discipline: Will be strictly enforced. Use of flashlights in the open, smoking and vehicle headlights from dusk to dawn, is a commanding officer's decision not one of personal convenience. We have NVDs, use them. There is seldom a reason to break light discipline.

Hygiene: Prior to eating hot chow in the field Squad Leaders will inspect their Squads for proper hygiene, clean hands, clean weapon, and the prescribed uniform. Poor hygiene will rob us of combat power. All Marines and Sailors will perform hygiene everyday, shaving and brushing

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teeth at a minimum with periodic foot inspections by leaders. Hand washing is mandatory and monitored. Squad Leaders check; Plt Cmdrs and Plt Sgts verify... NO EXCEPTIONS

Security: This must be a habit formed in CONUS otherwise it will be an afterthought and we will suffer for it. This is the premise of the Guardian Angel concept. I expect you to be naturally curious about your surroundings, you are always on patrol. **Never abdicate the security of your unit to anyone else.**

Never send Marines or Sailors alone anywhere. Everything is done in buddy teams, even head calls. This is a fundamental that will not be violated.

Security is 360, from buddy team to Battalion we will have 360 security. Be a hard target.

Physical Training is conducted daily IAW METT-T. Life in a combat zone will present very few opportunities for formation PT above the platoon level yet we must maintain our conditioning. At a minimum, a 15 minute combination of stretching, calisthenics, rifle PT and isometric, resistance exercises, and martial arts will suffice for maintenance of conditioning. This sharpens the mind and warms the body. Develop a program and couple it with your monitored hygiene program. I.e. PT followed by monitored hygiene and laundry and weapons maintenance.

Contact with the Enemy

We are a combat unit that is expert in the application of violence. Trust your instincts and make a decision IAW your higher's intent. I will support you. Use combat patience, suppress the enemy and when you move, do it with aggression and violence of action and finish the enemy. After first contact, the enemy will fear us more than they hate us.

Never make an "uncovered move" in the face of the enemy. From buddy rushes to bounding by platoons always have an over watch element prepared to deliver fires.

Always establish 360 security even when on the move or attacking.

We will take casualties in combat, men will die. Accept that as fact now and resolve to stay above the emotion and remain focused on the mission. Do not allow casualties to slow our speed, the best way to take care of our wounded is to finish the enemy. **Lead from the front. When conditions are worst is when you need to be seen the most.**

Encourage constructive feedback. Continue to use the AAR as a means for this, especially in combat. Our best ideas and TTPs will come from our NCOs and junior Marines.

Treat the dead, friendly and enemy, with respect. Do not pose for photos with the enemy dead or otherwise desecrate their remains. It is cowardly.

Upon contact with the enemy establish violence supremacy and kill them. Once they quit then give quarter. Keep our honor clean, do not allow atrocities that will sully our reputation, make cowards of our Marines and stiffen the enemy's resolve.

Treat prisoners with dignity but do not trust them and be forceful and firm. Do not abuse prisoners, it is cowardly.

Treat the locals with dignity and be courteous, but never be "friendly", it is a weakness they will exploit.

Make peace with your maker, trust in your brothers, dedicate yourself to the unit and mission... then fight with a "happy heart".